



Directorate of
Intelligence

~~Secret~~ / SUB 150

(M)

Terrorism Review

16 February 1984

Best Copy Available

Declassified and
Approved for Release
July 2000

~~Secret~~

Chile: Terrorism on the Rise

The serious rise in terrorist violence in Chile in recent months has prompted President Pinochet to draft stronger security measures.

The late August 1983 assassination of the Santiago military governor, retired Maj. Gen. Carol Urzua, marked the beginning of the most recent wave of terrorist violence. Terrorist activity appears to be continuing at a high level in 1984. The violence has been characterized by a significant increase in the number of bombing and arson attacks against public property and a campaign of selective assassination, directed mainly against the national police.

more than 170 bombings took place in 1983—two-thirds of them during the last quarter of the year. Seven national policemen have been assassinated since September. Seventeen bombings were reported in the last week of January alone.

Most of the bombings have been directed against public utilities and have been designed to cause maximum property damage but minimal personal injuries. The most successful coordinated bombing effort occurred in mid-December when unidentified terrorists downed several high-tension electrical towers, causing a simultaneous blackout in Santiago and several other cities in central Chile.

In response to the recent increase in terrorist activity, President Pinochet reportedly has drafted a new antiterrorism decree that will strengthen the repressive powers of the much-criticized secret police and require tougher sentences for all acts of antigovernment violence. Critics of the proposed law contend that Pinochet's authoritarian regime is threatened less by leftist violence than by growing opposition to the secret police. The proposal requires only the approval of the ruling military junta, comprising the chiefs of the three armed services and the national police.

The current high level of terrorist activity appears likely to continue into the near future. A return of the "national days of protest" is being planned for next month by moderate opposition groups, and it is likely that radical groups will take advantage of the public demonstrations that are intended to galvanize public demands for Pinochet's ouster. Although the various terrorist groups operating in the major Chilean cities do not appear to have the capability to mount major operations, they probably will continue highly visible bombings of public property.